



AOT in Action

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

A Message from Director Sherry Henry:

Good afternoon,

Are you ready for one exciting and incredible conference? We are!

AOT and our industry partners, the Arizona Hotel & Lodging Association, the Arizona Tourism Alliance and the Arizona Restaurant Association, have finalized all the details for the [2011 Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism](#) and we couldn't be more thrilled about what's in store!

We have a great line-up of informative breakout sessions and extraordinary speakers. From the latest industry-related research trends and statistics to social media techniques and relationship building tips you will gain valuable insight for your community's marketing efforts.

See you at the conference!

Sherry Henry
Director, Arizona Office of Tourism

AOT News

Advertisement Opportunities Available in AOT's Consumer Fulfillment Pieces

2012 Arizona Official State Visitor's Guide

Madden Media is now accepting advertising reservations for the 2012 Official State Visitors Guide (OSVG) and Map. This is the main consumer fulfillment piece of the Arizona Office of Tourism. The 2011 OSVG successfully integrates with AOT's online marketing efforts, including www.arizonaguide.com. Travelers have responded well to the newer OSVG design and magazine-style features that were rolled out in the 2010 OSVG and Map. Of particular interest,

potential visitors found advertising placements helpful and stated in focus group testing that they would use them to choose specific trip activities. The 2012 OSVG will continue to build upon this success!

For more information, please contact Madden Media's Phoenix office at 480-638-3770 or Tucson office at 520-322-0895.

AOT Consumer E-newsletter & Banner Ads

Additionally, there is also a chance to participate in AOT's consumer eNewsletters and banner advertising efforts on www.arizonaguide.com. AOT distributes a monthly eNewsletter to 350,000+ subscribers who have opted in to information regarding Arizona travel. Madden Media is also offering immediate opportunities for interested advertisers to sponsor AOT's consumer eNewsletters, which have been recently redesigned to ensure more attention and click-thrus for partners. Immediate online opportunities are available, as well as discounts when you combine print placements with the digital vehicles.

For more information, please contact Madden Media's Phoenix office at 480-638-3770 or Tucson office at 520-322-0895.

AOT's Trade and Media Relations 2012 Marketing Plan Now Available on AZOT.gov

The Arizona Office of Tourism has released its 2012 Trade and Media Relations Marketing Plan*. The plan is accessible on the agency's business-to-business site, <http://azot.gov/industry-events-and-calendar/trade-and-media-events> and displays all the Trade Shows; Sales and Media Missions; Familiarization (FAM) Tours and Press Trips; and Co-operative Marketing Projects that the agency will participate in during the next fiscal year. For more information contact Mary Rittmann at 602-364-3730 or via email at mrtrittmann@azot.gov.

** Continual updates to the Calendar will occur as FY12 plans are confirmed. AOT reserves the right to cancel or change dates, details and participation cost of trade shows, sales missions; media missions FAM tours, press trips and co-operative projects as needed.*

Arizona Calling – Share Something Amazing!

AOT, in collaboration with the Governor's Task Force on Tourism and Economic Vitality, has launched "[Arizona Calling – Share Something Amazing](#)," an ePostcard campaign featuring iconic Arizona images. The ePostcard campaign features vibrant imagery of the Grand Canyon State that gives residents and travelers the opportunity to share Arizona's beauty with others. With customizable messages, email ePostcards can be sent to friends and family around the globe at no cost. Built to be an on-going campaign, the images of the ePostcard will change periodically to reflect Arizona's seasons and activities. The ePostcard is available through Arizonaguide.com.

Get your Summer Travel Packages and Deals on Value AZ.com

The new landing page is up for [Value AZ.com](http://ValueAZ.com), but we still need your travel packages and deals! The ads showcase the amazing summer travel opportunities found throughout Arizona in addition to promoting the economic benefits of the travel and tourism industry. **To celebrate the Arizona Centennial, coming up February 14, 2012, we're also asking that deals and packages supplied use the Centennial theme whenever possible.**

If you want your summer travel packages or deals promoted through ValueAZ.com, this is your chance! Upload your travel deals and packages to the Travel Deals section of AOT's consumer Web site, <http://www.arizonaguide.com/arizona-tourism-partners>. You must first sign up to be a Travel Partner on www.Arizonaguide.com before you can list a travel package or deal. There is no charge to list a package on the Travel Deals section. If you have questions or need additional assistance, please contact Sandy Pederson at 602-364-3698 or via email at spederson@azot.gov.

Upcoming Events & Activities

GCOT

Dates: July 13-15

Location: Doubletree Paradise Valley Resort

Vancouver Media Marketplace

Dates: August 16

Location: Hawksworth Restaurant, Vancouver

France Media Mission

Date: September 12 – 16

Location: Paris, France

Industry News

Survey Reveals U.S. Workers May Change or Cancel Summer Vacations if Economic Volatility Continues

With summer vacations in full swing ahead of the busiest travel weekend of the season, employees (including those self employed) reveal they may change or cancel travel plans if the recent volatility in the economy continues. According to a new survey conducted online in June 2011 by Harris Interactive on behalf of jobs and career community Glassdoor, 45 percent of employees and those self employee who have/plan to take a vacation would reduce or cancel their plans to save money if the economy continues its volatility.

The survey also found: Younger Workers More Likely to Pull the Plug. More than half (52 percent) of full time/part time/self employed adults 18-34 would change their vacation plans if the economy continues its volatility, as would 44 percent of employees ages 35-44 and 42 percent of ages 45-54. Older workers are less likely to do so -- just over one-third (36 percent) of employees ages 55+ would change or cancel their trip. Southerners and Westerners More Likely to Cancel Plans. People in the West and South are also more apt to change or cancel plans given the economy -- more than half (53 percent) of employees in both regions noted they would alter

their vacation compared to 38 percent in the Midwest and just one-third (34 percent) in the Northeast.

Work Expectations While On Vacation. For those who do manage to get away, there may be an expectation to work during vacation -- roughly one in eight (13 percent) of employees³ (excluding those self employed) who have taken/plan to take a vacation this summer reported they are expected to work while away. Nearly one in five (18 percent) noted they are not expected to work, but they must be available should an emergency arise, even while on vacation. However, the majority can forget it all for a short time: two-thirds of employees (65 percent) who have taken/plan to take a vacation this summer report they are able to check out from their jobs completely.

Employees in South and West Expected to Work More on Vacation. More employees who have taken/plan to take a vacation this summer in the South (18 percent) and West (17 percent) noted they were expected to work during vacation, as compared to employees in the Midwest (8 percent) or Northeast (7 percent). **More Men Expected to Work Than Women.** More men who have taken/plan to take a vacation this summer (17 percent) report that they are expected to work while on vacation than women (8 percent). (*Travel Industry Wire, July 4*)

STR Sees Across the Board Hotel Improvement

Hotel performance is improving nationwide with all three performance metrics last month showing increases, says global hospitality consulting firm STR.

In year-over-year national comparisons, occupancy rose 2.8 percent, to 71.6 percent; the average daily rate increased 3.3 percent, to US\$102.33; and revenue per available room finished the week up 6.2 percent, to \$73.30.

The largest upticks in each category:

- Dallas had an 11.5 percent increase in occupancy.
- Properties in the San Francisco/San Mateo region experienced an ADR increase of 16.9 percent, hitting \$153.55.
- San Francisco/San Mateo also experienced a significant increase in RevPAR, which was up 22.9 percent, to \$138.19. (*Travel Mole, July 5*)

Weak Dollar Good News for North America's Travel Market

For those who see the silver lining in a dark cloud, here's some good news: the weak dollar that has hovered about US\$1.40 to the euro has helped promote tourism in two ways: by increasing foreign travel and by encouraging Americans to tend to travel more in the US.

The weak dollar is part of a shift in the global balance of spending power that will certainly have many long-term impacts in other areas in addition to travel. Perhaps the most dramatic sign of this shift came last November when the butt of snide American jokes, the Canadian dollar, surpassed the US in value for the first time ever.

The fall of the dollar means international travelers can get more for their money by spending it in the US. But it has at the same time discouraged US travelers from visiting traditional overseas destinations such as Paris, where tourism has been declining since 2007.

Some hotel industry executives said they are seeing particularly notable increases in travelers from Europe, where the common currency has risen against the dollar. Some areas have benefitted by this more than others. Two obvious examples: California and New York City.

Hotels, restaurants, and agents in tourist destinations are reporting higher numbers of international customers. But the impact of the weak dollar does more than draw foreign tourists to the US. It is helping domestic travel as well. Marquee national parks such as Yellowstone and Yosemite are finding visitation is way upwards. As foreign travel has fallen, Yellowstone went from 3.1 million visitors in 2007 to 3.6 million last year.

But the domestic travel trend goes well beyond parks. More than US\$700 billion was spent on US travel in 2009, with \$610 spent by US residents, says the US Travel Association. Those numbers are going up, the association says. The only down side to foreign visitors is that the US is still lagging behind other nations. Over the past 10 years, the travel industry says international travel to the US has increased just 2 percent. (*Travel Mole, July 5*)

Report Finds World Tourist Growth Should Continue

World tourist destinations that have been slow to recover from the economic downturn can expect to see more demand towards the end of the year, according to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) World Tourism Barometer. International tourist arrivals grew by 4.5 percent in the first four months of 2011, According to the latest issue of the UNWTO report.

“Global tourism continues to consolidate the recovery of 2010 despite the impact of recent developments in the Middle East and North Africa, as well as the tragic events in Japan, which are temporarily affecting travel flows to these regions,” said UNWTO Secretary General Taleb Rifai.

In the Americas, international tourist arrivals increased by 5 percent, driven by the strong results of South America, which contrasted with the below average growth of North and Central American destinations, according to the Barometer.

The Barometer found growth in all regions with the exception of the Middle East. Some sub-regions achieved double-digit growth: South America (+17 percent), South Asia (+14 percent), and Southeast Asia (+10 percent). Between January and April 2011, destinations worldwide recorded 268 million international tourist arrivals, some 12 million more compared to the 256 million registered in the same period in 2010. April was the strongest month with an estimated increase of 6 percent.

Europe exceeded expectations (+6 percent) and posted the highest growth in the first four months of 2011. “As the peak tourist season gets underway in the northern hemisphere, short-term prospects remain positive,” the barometer predicts.

UNWTO maintains its forecast for international tourist arrivals in 2011 at between 4 percent and 5 percent, slightly above the long-term average and in line with previous assessments. The developments in the Middle East, North Africa, and Japan are not expected to significantly alter the global forecast. (*Travel Mole, July 5*)

New Study Proves Tourism Promotion Campaigns Increase Visitation

Reducing state and local tourism marketing programs in the name of saving taxpayer dollars impedes economic growth, according to new research conducted by Longwoods International and commissioned by the U.S. Travel Association. A comprehensive analysis of recent campaigns by the State of Michigan and the Greater Philadelphia Tourism Marketing Corporation (GPTMC) reveals that marketing programs drive greater visitation, generate new tax dollars and create jobs for states and local communities.

"There's a reason that America's most prominent brands continue to increase their marketing budgets: it works," said Roger Dow, president and CEO of the U.S. Travel Association. "This study proves that destinations must operate like Nike, Apple and similar businesses that have followed the marketing path to success. Substantial cuts to destination marketing programs are counterproductive and will have long-term negative economic consequences."

The research proves that destination marketing programs generate more tax revenue than they cost by driving substantial increases in visitation and spending in local communities. Download the complete study: [The Power of Destination Marketing](#). (*Travel Industry Wire*, July 7)

PhoCusWright Releases U.S. Consumer Travel Report Third Edition

As the second half of 2011 gets underway, U.S. travelers may finally be getting their groove back, according to a new report (www.phocuswright.com/store/1670) from travel industry authority PhoCusWright. After a tepid return to leisure travel in 2010, many consumers are eager to bid farewell to financial worries and get away for a well-deserved vacation. With traveler intentions predicting an uptick in both leisure trips and travel spend, 2011 should be yielding better results for travel companies across the spectrum.

According to PhoCusWright's U.S. Consumer Travel Report Third Edition, 63% of U.S. adults with Internet access took a paid leisure trip in 2010, representing only a slight improvement over the prior year (61%). Yet the share of consumers traveling for leisure remained far below 2008 levels (71%). And although indicators of recovery were discernable across consumer metrics, the relief was meager. Average annual household travel expenditure edged up just 6% to \$2,886, after dropping 11% in 2009.

"U.S. consumers loosened their wallets slightly in 2010, allowing a larger percentage of Americans to indulge in a well-deserved vacation," said Carroll Rheem, director of research. "But the prevailing positivity was riddled with apprehension. The consumer psyche took a major hit, and a return to precession confidence levels won't happen overnight."

The U.S. leisure travel market, however, is clearly on an upswing, and travelers express a more optimistic outlook for 2011. Over twice as many travelers plan to take more trips (32%) than fewer trips (14%) in 2011, a significant improvement over traveler intentions for 2010. Budget intentions predict a further increase in travel spend, with 29% of travelers planning to spend more, compared to 24% the previous year. Yet 16% of U.S. travelers anticipate spending less in 2011, down only slightly from the 18% who had planned to spend less in 2010. While recovery will be substantially stronger in 2011, consumer intentions convey anxiety along with a healthy dose of replenished demand.

On the Edge of Optimism: Key U.S. Traveler Insights, a PhoCusWright Webinar (July 13 at 12:00 pm EDT), provides an overview of the status of consumer travel in the U.S. and insights into key indicators for 2011. Carroll Rheem, director, research and moderator Lorraine Sileo, vice president, research, will share key findings from PhoCusWright's Consumer Travel Report Third Edition in this one-hour presentation.

PhoCusWright's Consumer Travel Report Third Edition provides a comprehensive view of the status of consumer travel in the U.S., helping travel companies adapt their operations for the ever-changing landscape of the consumer travel marketplace. This report reviews the dynamics that drove consumer travel behavior in 2010 and highlights key indicators for understanding trends in 2011. Based on an online survey of more than 2,500 U.S. consumers, the report examines travelers who play an active role in planning their leisure trips. In addition to tracking fundamental behaviors such as the incidence of travel, the report analyzes the influence of various media, typical booking methods and the motives behind consumer decisions.

Key topics include:

- Overall travel incidence, trip frequency and duration
- Travel spend and budget intentions for the coming year
- In-depth analysis of lodging and air travel trends, and purchase incidence for car rental, cruise, rail, vacation packages and destination activities
- Comparison of consumer behavior by phase: destination selection, shopping, purchasing and sharing
- How U.S. travelers decide where to go
- Information sources and online features that influence travel shopping decisions
- Travel booking channels and purchase behavior

PhoCusWright's Consumer Travel Report Third Edition, a Global Edition publication, combines crucial consumer metrics with sophisticated analysis to help travel companies capitalize on the consumer trends impacting their business. Early-bird pricing is in effect through July 31. (*Travel Industry Wire*, July 7)

Calendar of Events

Visit www.ArizonaGuide.com to find information on all the exciting [events, festivals and activities](#) held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

Connect with the Arizona Office of Tourism!

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